

Lesbian Weddings

We Need Your Input...

Love is in the air. It seems that everywhere we go we are running into women who are planning ceremonies which are being variously referred to as weddings, commitment ceremonies, union ceremonies or trysts. Never mind the lack to date of legal sanction, it seems lesbians are formalizing and celebrating their relationships by "marrying" in record numbers. Good for us! One can only hope that, like "life imitating art", the necessary legislation will soon be enacted.

We thought it would be fun to do an article for our next newsletter on lesbian weddings in our community, but we need your help. If you have had or are planning a ceremony, we want to hear from you. We are interested in knowing what type of ceremony feels right for you, what you are calling it, and a few words that express your feelings about doing it. We will use first names only and you may use pseudonyms if you wish.

Please e-mail your information to our newsletter committee -- suecharles2001@aol.com.

Or you may call Sue or Sandy at 944-7055 if it would be easier to share the information verbally. Either way, we look forward to hearing from you and to having the opportunity to celebrate your relationship in our next issue.



"Men occasionally stumble over the truth, but most of them pick themselves up and hurry off as if nothing happened." — Winston Churchill

How to tell if you're a butch or a femme

Submitted by Ninna Bryan

I read this book by a woman who calls herself, Ms. Behavior, and it takes a whimsical look at a lot of the gay community stereotypes. I wanted to share this particular subject with you. The book is by Meryl Cohn, published in 1995.

"Ms. Behavior is aware that by bringing up the butch/femme topic, she risks inciting the wrath of thousands of usually good-hearted lesbians, who may wish to trample Ms. Behavior's pulchritude with their cleats. But Ms. Behavior is committed to a life of living dangerously and saying what she thinks.

The iron fist of political correctness warns against acknowledging that the butch/femme phenomenon exists. But *you* know it does. So it is only when you are alone or surrounded by lesbians in the know that you feel safe to wonder, does it really mean anything if your lover does the laundry and makes dinner every night while you take out the garbage and install the phone jacks? Yes, Ms. Behavior thinks so. She thinks it means you're a Big Bad Butch.

The butch/femme issue can be difficult to swallow because it is frequently and erroneously framed, mostly by foolish heterosexuals, as a gender-identity issue. These misinformed dolts have no way of understanding lesbian sexuality other than as "Who's the man?" Don't waste your breath telling them that this is not a boy-girl thing, or that it is ignorant to construe the butch/femme business as imitative of designated male and female roles in straight culture. They will not get it.

Do not let it get to you, either. Ms. Behavior knows some dykes who get so upset by the whole issue that they deny the very existence of the phenomenon, even as they pound nails into the wall to work out their rage about the matter, productively creating an extension on the house while their lovers sew lace curtains for the living room.

Butch and femme is not an either/or thing; it is a continuum, and can sometimes be rather subtle. There is a fluidity to the expression of either characteristic over time; you may be way more femme (or butch) now than you were three years ago, depending on what other changes have occurred in your life. You might have a fabulously delicate new lover, for example, who inspires you to new levels of butchitude; but once she leaves you for an ax-wielding Amazon, you might just go back to your regular medium-femme self. Additionally, Ms. Behavior finds that describing just how butch or femme someone really is sometimes can be accomplished only as a relative thing, as in "She's butcher than Jamie Lee Curtis, but not as butch as Kate Clinton." That creates a pretty clear picture, doesn't it? Although

Continued on page 10



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THE SACWN MISSION

SACWN's mission is to provide lesbians with social activities in a safe and vibrant environment, a supportive network, and resources to link our diverse community.

SACWN NEWSLETTER POLICY

This newsletter is entirely dependent on volunteers. Please remember that we also have full time jobs.

In order to be included in the next newsletter, material must arrive in our mailbox or at our e-mail address by the 12th of March. We encourage submissions (e.g., Letters to the Editor, news items, photos, etc.). Please type submissions and include your name and phone number for verification. Submissions on diskette (Word97) or by e-mail are especially encouraged.

FREE ADS: This section is for selling things of a personal nature, advertising for a roommate or finding a lost love. These ads are FREE to SACWN members who are advertising for personal use (no business advertising).

BUSINESS ADS: Camera-ready ads are \$150, per business card size ad. Ads must be prepaid. Ads are on a 12-month/six issues per year basis. For more info, please contact Sandy at 916-944-7055.

NOTE: The SACWN newsletter expresses the opinions of the authors, and does not necessarily represent the opinions of the Steering Committee or the general membership. The editor reserves the right to exclude and/or edit the length of letters and articles.

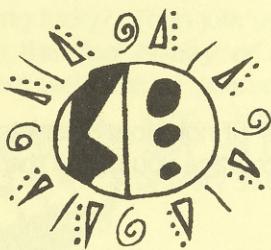
CONFIDENTIALITY: SACWN takes the following precautions to insure the privacy of its members:

1. The mailing list is never sold nor lent to anyone—be they other women's groups or inquiring lesbians.
2. The newsletter is always sent 1st class, rather than at the cheaper bulk rate.
3. Each newsletter is addressed to a specific subscriber, not "resident" or "household."
4. Newsletters are not sent to individual men

~~ Women who want to participate in the operation of SACWN are encouraged to contact any of the committee coordinators listed to the left.

George W. Bush was asked if he could sum up the significance of the Roe vs. Wade decision. He said it was the most important decision George Washington had to make before crossing the Delaware.





Saturday, April 28th, 2001

8 pm—12:30 am

Grapes Restaurant

815 11th Street (11th & H)

SACWN, Inc.

presents

Live Music by
Second
Wind

SPRING

FLING

Dance



\$10 at the door

No host bar & light hors d'oeuvres

Wheelchair accessible

Secured parking available

This is a women's event

Special Interest Groups (SIGS) Bulletin



SACWN's SIGs are small, friendly groups of women who get together monthly (if not more often) to share activities of mutual interest. New members are always welcomed, so we encourage you to call the contact person listed to find out what activities are being planned.

If you are interested in forming a Special Interest Group (SIG), please contact Betty at 731-7192 with your idea. You could share a favorite hobby or interest with other women. We are looking for a leader for the Singles Group. It seems that every woman who takes this on ends up in a relationship. If you are interested in leading the Singles Group or any other SIG, contact Betty at the above number

Rainbow Campers

Rainbow Campers, founded by the late Jayne Rountree, is a loose knit group of lesbians who get together and camp at preselected campgrounds each month, April through October. In memory of Jayne we held an impromptu meeting while camping at Coloma and decided on the following trips for 2001:

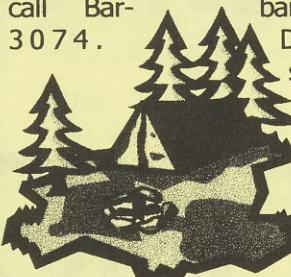
April 13,14,15 Coloma. Mary & Linda 732-5269.

June 15,16,17 Casini Ranch. Joyce & Barb 929-3074.

July 20,21,22 Olema (Pt. Reyes area). Joyce & Barb 929-3074.

October 19,20,21 Coloma. Mary & Linda 732-5269.

These trips were decided "ad hoc". We have no trip ideas for May August or September. Anyone willing to be a Wagon Master or who has an idea for where to camp please call Barbara at 929-3074. Destinations should be easily reached for those who work and would not be able to travel until late in the day or the next day.



How to Attend a Trip:

1. Call the Wagoneer for the trip(s) you want to attend. She will make the group reservation up to sixty days in advance of the scheduled camp date, so call her early.
2. The Wagoneer will tell you the site fee and cancellation date. She will request that you send her the fee for the number of nights that you plan to camp.

If you decide to cancel your reservation, call the Wagoneer before the cancellation date. Fee refunds cannot be made after the cancellation date.

Top 10

Top 10 is a group of women over fifty and women who love women over fifty. Each month we get together for a meal at a local restaurant or for special at-home potlucks.

Saturday, April 21st – Potluck from 2:00 to 6:00PM. Bring a side dish, favorite drink, and folding chair. Call Donna & Sharon, 487-9151 by April 13th to RSVP and get directions.

Saturday, May 19th – Potluck at 2:00PM. Bring a side dish and favorite drink. Call Mary S., 395-4147 by May 16th to RSVP and get directions.



Newcomers

Are you new to the area or the lifestyle? Want to meet new people? Want to know where to go? Give me a call and I will do all I can to provide you with information to help you get tuned into the network of activities available.

Diana—916-487-3124



Garden Club

The Garden Club shares information, plantings, takes landscape tours, and much more. If you're interested, please e-mail me at gpfgarden@cs.com or call Glenda 916-454-0246

Fool House Poker Group

Feeling lucky? Then join us for a friendly game of poker the **2nd Friday of every month**. Novice players welcome. I guarantee you'll have a good time. For game time and location, call Gretchen 916-922-6287 or Mary 916-723-5269.



Half-Fast Hiking Group

This is a well-organized, friendly group of serious hikers who know how to have fun. We are in our fourth successful year of day-hiking with hikes scheduled once per month all year long. We walk at a comfortable pace and usually average about five miles round trip on hikes that are rated easy to moderate. Call for a calendar of events and an information sheet. All newcomers will receive a warm welcome! Please join us for the time of your life! Call Linda or Julie at 731-5838:

March 18 – Marin Headlands
April 29 – Feather Falls
May 20 – Kayaking on Lake Natomas
June 10 – Caples Creek
July 22 – Lake Winnamuka
August 19 – Point Reyes
September 9 – Angel Island
October 28 – Bridgeport
November 18 – Putah Creek
December 16 – River Trail Bike Ride



Women's Music

Are you interested in women's music? Do you want to support women musicians that have been involved in the women's movement for many years while having a good time? We will be going to live performances of women's music in Northern California. All are welcome to join us and enjoy the pleasures that listening to great music can bring. If you are interested in joining us or if you just want to know what performances are coming up call Pat—916-363-7535. Make sure you ask for Pat, please! You can also e-mail me at pwood314@yahoo.com



(SIGS Cont'd)

Arts & Entertainment

Saturday, Jan 20th, twenty of us got together for dinner at Café California in Davis before going to "Women's Music Night" at Café Roma. Food was delicious. Rebecca Riots trio and Duval Speck provided some terrific music to a SRO crowd.

Saturday, Feb 3rd, six of us went to the Crest and saw the award winning film "Before Night Falls" It stayed true to Reinaldo Arenas autobiography, especially his and other gays harsh treatment under Castro's Cuba.

Friday, Feb. 9th, six of us had a wonderful pre-theatre dinner at Jackson Alley. Lambda's production of "Standing in the Shadows" was very well done. A member of the audience Karen Thompson, one of the real victims of our "family" laws, provided the basis for one of the plays main characters. After the play, we went to the Lambda Center to attend a reception held in Karen's honor. Sadly, Karen told me that Sharon's family remains estranged from her.

Saturday, Feb. 24th, three of the Duval Speck groupies went to Common Grounds Coffeehouse in Davis to hear some great music. Cathy and Linda can go from show tunes to soft rock to women's songs to rhythm & blues and make it look so easy to us musically impaired individuals. I am so jealous!

Coming up...

Saturday, April 21st, Lambda's "Opening Lines", Geery Theatre, 22nd & L Streets, \$10.00 advance, \$12.00 at the door. Call 484-4742 for tickets. Dinner at 6:30PM somewhere.

Thursday, May 10, 2:00PM, "Fosse" at Community Center Theater, 13th & L Streets, \$25.00 for 2nd tier front. Call 264-5181 CCBO for tickets.

Saturday, May 12th, Lambda's "Lesbian Laugh Fest" (fundraiser), 24th Street theatre, 24th St. & 3rd Ave. Call 484-4742 for tickets. \$10.00 in advance and \$12.00 at the door. We will meet at 6:45PM at Café Melange, 24th St. & 2nd Ave for coffee and dessert first.

FYI... I have started another list of women interested in seeing "Six Women with Brain Death". If you have not seen this terrific, timely, comedic performance call me and I will put you in contact with other women in same circumstance. Please RSVP timely in order to arrange carpool and/or dinner reservations.

For more information and to suggest an event for the group call Dee 443-2377.

Volunteer to be an usher at a prominent playhouse and see the stage play as a thank you. Call Kathy, 920-2162.

Bend Over ... It's Tax Time Again!

And once again gay and lesbian couples will be denied the thousands of dollars in deductive benefits available to heterosexual couples. However, under the terms of AB 1338, legislation recently introduced by Assemblymember Paul Koretz, that could change.

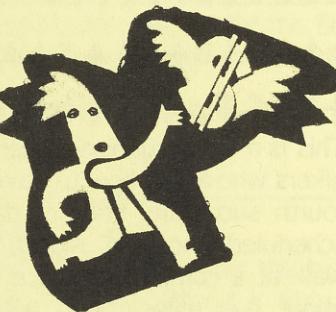
If enacted, AB 1338 would establish the choice for same gender couples in California to enter into a civil union, similar to the law recently passed in Vermont. Couples in a civil union would have the opportunity to obtain all of the same rights, protections, benefits and responsibilities afforded heterosexual couples by California's marriage laws, including the joint filing of state income taxes, marital tax rates and marital tax exemptions.

Also included in AB 1338 are provisions relating to:

- Rights and obligations of support during and after the relationship, and community property;
- Child custody and visitation, and stepparent adoption;
- Title, probate, administration of estates, acquisition, ownership or transfer of real or personal property;
- Government benefits, including workers' compensation and unemployment insurance;

- Health insurance coverage for spouses, family care and medical leave, and bereavement leave;
- Hospital visitation, medical consent, conservatorship, disposition of remains, and rights of burial in family cemeteries.

The California Alliance for Pride and Equality (CAPE) is coordinating the broad coalition of organizations supporting this legislation. Along with CAPE, we should all applaud Assemblymember Koretz on his leadership in taking on this issue for the 400,000 same sex couples who currently reside in California. It is historic legislation designed to preserve basic rights and provide equal treatment under the law.



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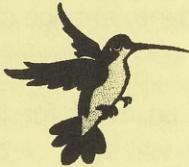
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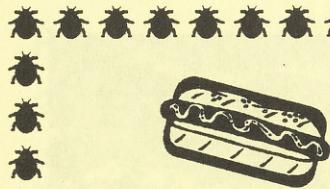
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Saturday, May 12, 2001

11 am- 6 pm

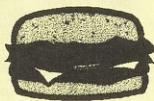
E. Portal Park

M @ 51st



SACWN, Inc.
Presents

Potluck/Picnic Social



Admission is FREE

There will be complimentary
hotdogs and charcoal.

BBQ pits available

Bring a dish and games to share

Bring your own refreshments, No alcohol

Please, no under 18 years of age



9-Hole Golf Scramble Tournament

Sign Up Early: Entries due by June 2nd

Date: June 9th, Saturday (9:00 am tee times)

Location: Champions Golf Links

(8915 Gerber Rd. - Corner of Elk Grove-Florin at Gerber)

Cost: \$20.00 (BBQ Only - \$10.00)

Includes: Green Fees, Barbeque, Team Prizes
donated by Camille, Merrill Lynch

Entry Prize Giveaway Drawing - Calloway Big
Bertha SteelHead Driver



**Pre-register by sending check
or money order to (with sign up):**

SACWN
PO Box 19036
Sacramento, CA
95819-0036

For more information contact:
Linda 456-4859 or
SACWN phone
(916)451-8034

SIGN UP AS INDIVIDUALS, COUPLES OR TEAMS:

Player Name

Address, City, Zip

Phone No#

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

BBQ ONLY: _____

Total Amount: _____



Thank you!!

SACWN wishes to send a special and heart-felt thank you
to all the volunteers who helped out for the Valentine's
dance. It was quite a success and we couldn't have done
it without all of your help. Thank you for being the gener-
ous people that you are!!



Holly's Place

A Special Place for All Women

We wanted to send special thanks to Holly's for
providing the Valentine's Dance with an exce-
ptional gift.

Connect Techs, Inc



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Now hiring for
Assembly work

Custom
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Harness
Assembly

Please Call Sandy
For Details
374-9020

Girl Glass

Thanks to Girl Glass also, for
donating a distinctive contribu-
tion for the Valentine's Dance.



Friday, May 4, 2001
5pm—8pm
Faces, 2000 K Street

SACWN, Inc.
Presents a



Cinco De Mayo Social



Live Music

No cover, no host bar

Hors D'oeuvres

This is a women's event

Recipes

Overnight Scalloped Chicken Casserole

This recipe is great because it can be prepared ahead of time and then popped into the oven later on.

2 cans cream of mushroom soup, undiluted
 2-1/2 cups milk
 1/2 lb. American or cheddar cheese, cubed
 4 cups diced, cooked chicken or turkey
 1 box (7 ounces) macaroni
 3 hard-cooked eggs, chopped
 1/2 cup butter or margarine, melted, divided
 1-1/2 cups bread crumbs



In a large bowl, combine soup, milk and cheese. Add chicken or turkey, macaroni and eggs. Stir in 1/4 cup melted butter. Transfer to a greased 9" x 13" baking dish. Cover and refrigerate for 8 hours or overnight.

Toss the bread crumbs with the remaining 1/4 cup butter; sprinkle over casserole. Bake, uncovered, at 350 degrees for 60-65 minutes or until bubbly and golden brown.

Serves 8-12

*Calories can be reduced by using low-fat soup, cheese and milk



Cultural Event at L.L.A.C.E.

Sunday, April 22, 2001

2:00—4:00 pm

Lavender Library
 1414 21st Street

The GLBT Historical Society of Northern California

Will be making a presentation as Part of their Oral History Project. The is a **FREE** event.

For Info on the GLBT Society:

www.glbhistory.org

Or call Gail

(916) 492-0558

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~Spiritually Speaking~

This time, like all times, is a very good one if we but know what to do with it.

Is the glass half full or half empty? We know the answer to that question can symbolically reflect whether we have a positive or negative outlook on life. If we see the glass as half empty, we focus on what is gone. But if we say the glass is half full, we see what remains.

If we're full of ideas about how to spend our time, then our outlook is positive and we'll not waste a second. But if we're feeling bored or directionless or lonely, our days may be filled with a lot of negative energy and wasted moments.

Instead of focusing on what we don't have, we can change our attitude and look at what we do have. We have choices about how we want to spend our time. The decisions we make will have a direct bearing on how meaningful each day will be.

How can I change my attitude and make each day full?



Eileen Heinrich L.C.S.W.

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How to Tell if You're a Butch (Cont'd from Page 1)

some women femme it up with cloth-femme. Ms. Behavior momentarily you own more than three hair prod-ing and accessories, Ms. Behavior choked on her rice cake, and then ucts, not including shampoo and con-likes to point out that true butchness went on with her life. After all, part of ditioner? Would you rather *look* like or femmeness is really an internal living a serene existence means real-Demi Moore than sleep with her? If thing. For example, no matter how izing that there are some mistakes you've answered yes to all of the high Jodie's hair is piled and no mat- too large ever to attempt to correct. above, you're a deep-down femme. ter how low-cut or girly her gown Self-knowledge is a beautiful thing, It has been Ms. Behavior's experi-might be on the night she receives however, and needs to be cultivated ence (or perhaps she should say ob-her Oscar, she is still a tough butch in all lesbians. Once you know your-servation) that a dyke's relative babe to the core. (Let's also not dis-self, you can function much more butchness or femmeness in daily liv-count the fact that she talks like a confidently in relation to other dykes, ing does not necessarily bear on how truck driver.) Geena Davis, in con-allowing them to spin frantically she behaves in the boudoir. You'll trast, is an undisputed femme, and around your calm and reassuring cen- know what Ms. Behavior means if no amount of Thelmaesque rough ter. This will make you feel hip and you've ever seen the button that says talk or gun-wielding can disguise that Zen-like. So here's an exercise in self- "Butch in the bar and femme in the fact. The point is that (a) you can assessment for those of you who car." So don't be confused by the never cover the true essence o' butch claim to be confused. frosting-hair, polished-nails, gold-with makeup or clothing, and (b) a femme is a femme. Do you wear your keys on a clip chain "femme" who talks like a Ma-femme is a femme. and hook them to your belt loop? If rine sergeant in between spits, who

Butchness, however, is clearly not so, there's no question about the ex- you know would have you "yes, just a lesbian phenomenon; straight tent of your butchness. This is much ma'aming" and saluting in bed. And women clearly have the B-gene with- more an attitude thing than a cloth- that stone butch, ropy-muscled mem-out benefit of the means of express- ing thing; just ask your mother. She ber of your softball team who smokes ing it in an L-relationship. Who, for probably still yells at you for wearing Lucky Strikes with an attitude Brando example, is more butch than men's shoes, unless she has thor- would have envied might go home at night only to be totally sexually domi-Katharine Hepburn? (Or even Jane Fonda, who Ms. Behavior suspects Fonda, who Ms. Behavior suspects If you're in that ambiguous slacks-packs quite the metaphorical bulge and-blazer group, try this: Do you beneath that aerobics leotard?) It's own a pair of women's shoes with that stone butch, ropy-muscled mem- just that when straight women are even the teensiest heel? Do you have the so-called butch would rather die butch, it is usually called something to borrow pantyhose if the occasion arises to wear them? And would you Butch lesbians in the know long else. arises to wear them? And would you Butch lesbians in the know long

Some of Ms. Behavior's lesbian be able to don them unaided? ago discovered that some of their readers have written to her claiming Are you attracted to low-slung, wildest evenings of pleasure can hap-not to know where they fall on the phallically influenced vehicles? That pen at the hands of a seemingly de-butch/femme continuum, which Ms. Behavior finds quite odd. At the risk rather be Martina Navratilova than the sheets as a fierce orchestrator of of sounding like their mothers, to sleep with her? Butch again. love. The butch will resist at first; she these lesbians Ms. Behavior would Okay. Now, the femme diagnosis always tries to defend against her have to say, "What's wrong with you? involves visualization. Picture yourself own seduction, because she thinks Haven't you been paying attention? on a camping trip. Does the very idea she has to remain in control. In actu-Go look and see what's hanging in of sleeping in the woods make you ality, however, she longs to be ren-your closet." While clothing, as previ- feel nauseated? Do you immediately dered helpless so she can give up worry about whether you'd be able to that tiring feeling of being in charge determine the truth about who you take a shower and style your hair? If all the time. True butches are very are, it is at least an indication of a spider crawled into your sleeping exhausted people. If you are a where your aspirations lie. bag, would you make someone else femme who manages to maneuver a

Other lesbians are confused in an- kill it? If so, you've got the femme butch into that state, she is likely to other way, believing that they are thing happening in a big way. be very grateful. She will envision you femme when they're really butch, or If you need further convincing, ask as her salvation. She will get down on vice versa. Ms. Behavior once heard yourself these questions: Do you her knees and beg you for more. She the comedian Lea Delaria, in a seri- know when your clothing matches will fetch you things whenever you ous moment, describe herself as without having to ask anyone? Do snap your fingers. It will be fun..."

Rosemary Meltriller
Attorney at Law
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Sacramento, CA 95816

We're on the Web!
www.sacw.org

Sacramento Area Community Women's
Network
www.sacw.org



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April Showers...



Bring May Flowers

